



**U.S. Department of the Interior  
Minerals Management Service  
Gulf of Mexico OCS Region**

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Notice No. 116

August 8, 1983

OCS Operations Safety Alert

Fire While Starting Diesel Engine with Gas-Driven Engine

A flash fire occurred when an employee attempted to start up a generator driven by a diesel engine equipped with a gas-driven starter. The generator and engine were enclosed in a louvered housing. Ignition occurred when gas from the starter exhaust outlet entered the housing because the gas exhaust vent line had not been reconnected to the exhaust outlet following repairs. Remote starting capabilities also had not been reconnected, and the employee was required to operate the gas control valve manually while standing in the doorway of the housing. The gas which entered the housing is thought to have been ignited by the bendix of the starter or by solid particles in the gas stream striking metal surfaces. The employee suffered first, second, and third-degree burns; but shut off the gas flow by means of the manual gas control valve, preventing more extensive injury/damage.

To prevent a recurrence of this type of accident, the operator has:

1. Reconnected the gas exhaust vent line and remote starting capabilities.
2. Rerouted the gas exhaust vent lines upward, rather than downward through the deck.
3. Made a survey to assure that this subject accident potential does not exist on other facilities.

[signed] D.W. Solanas

Regional Supervisor

Offshore Operations Support